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AUTHOR Marine, Lynn
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ABSTRACT

A three-year project conducted in 2 Indianapolis, Indiana, public elementary schools involved three phases: (1) the study of teacher, student, and school program needs in the teaching and learning of reading and writing; (2) teacher and administrator inservice education; and (3) curriculum development and implementation. The inservice component was used throughout the project to promote the development of teacher awareness of language theory during the teaching of reading in the classroom. In addition, the component was used to promote a change in the kinds of teacher-student interactions maintained during reading instruction. In reviewing videotapes and transcriptions of classroom conversations of one teacher who participated in the project, it was clear that the instructional conversations had shifted. Initially the students were the source of a message only 16% of the time and all of the responses were at the factual level and text-focused. In contrast, three years later the source of instructional conversations was shared and the students functioned as the source of a message 37% of the time. In addition, all the conversations were tied to the teacher or student, none was triggered directly by the text. (HOD)

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INFLUENCES OF IN-SERVICE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION ON CLASSROOM VERBAL INTERACTIONS

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Lynn Marine
Spring 1981

CS206010

Paper presented in New Orleans, Louisianna, twenty-sixth annual convention, International Reading Association, 1981.

During the past three years, I have been working with the Indianapolis Public Schools, supervising a project funded by Lilly Endowment. This project was conducted at two elementary school sites within the district and involved both of the building principals, a combined student body of approximately 1,000 students, and 26 faculty members.

The project was divided into three phases: (1) the study of teacher, student, and school program needs in the teaching and learning of reading and writing; (2)teacher and administrator in-service education; and (3) curriculum development and implementation.

While I do not have ample time to present an overview of the entire project, I would like to address the in-service component as this is one area that seemed to show the most promise. The in-service component was utilized throughout the project to promote the development of teacher awareness of language theory and to encourage the inclusion and practical application of language theory during the teaching of reading in the classroom.

In addition, the in-service component was utilized to promote a change in the kinds of interactions maintained during reading instruction. Our observations revealed that a majority of the interactions were confined to teacher-directed conversations where the student was expected to supply either factual information from the text or a yes-no reply to the teachers' questions. We hoped to see a "give and take" atmosphere established in the instructional setting where the teacher would choose to function as a participant in the conversation rather than direct conversation, and thereby allow the reading instruction to come from an exchange of information between the student and the teacher.

Instruction in language theory supported the assumptions that reading like listening, speaking and writing, is an instance of language, that reading should therefore be viewed within a language framework, and that knowledge about language and learn-

ing is germane to developing rationale for reading instruction.

Through the use of lectures, in-class demonstrations, participation in summer courses offered through Indiana University, and the video-taping and reviewing of teachers' in-class presentations in reading instruction, the participants gained experience in the application of language theory in classroom instructional settings.

Six of the participants volunteered to be videotaped during the course of the three-year project. They were taped once during the months of September and October, and again during the months of February and March. For each taping, the teachers were asked to conduct the kind of reading lesson that was typical of the instructional strategies used in their classrooms. Each taping session lasted from 25-30 minutes. The tapes were reviewed, and each session was transcribed.

To describe the interactions, I utilized portions of a system Green and Wallat developed in their research on the emergence and negotiation of social processes during instructional conversations. They posit that as language unfolds in a conversation, the participants simultaneously engage in constructing social processes that aid in maintaining an active communicative system. An ad hoc analysis of the transcribed conversations produces a series of structural maps which symbolize the evolution of these messages and social rules. The identification of these structural maps begins with a micro-analysis of the evolving interactions or messages. It is this aspect that I will present today.

PLACE TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Descriptively, a message has a source (student, teacher, or other person), a form, a strategy (the purpose for the message), a desired level of comprehension, and a tie or relationship to previous messages.

The form is identified using the general terms--question and response. It is assumed that all messages in an instructional conversation are one or the other. The response, however, can be of three types:

1. Response+ responses that could be expected given the previous message. The accuracy of the re-

Transcript Line	SOURCE		FORM				STRATEGIES											LEVEL			TIE				UNIT RESOLUTION				
	Teacher	Student	Question	Response+	Response0	Response -	Focusing	Ignoring	Confirming +	Confirming -	Continuance	Extending	Raising	Clarifying	Editing	Controlling	Refocusing	Restating	Factual	Interpret	Applicative	Teacher	Student	Lesson		Resolved Interaction	Unresolved Interaction	Instruction Sequence	Phase	Lesson
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	30	31	50	60	70

sponse is not a consideration in assigning a message to this category.

2. Response0 — responses not predictable given the previous message, e.g., spontaneous messages or messages offered by persons not designated as the intended sender of the message.

3. Response- — non-responses and comments such as "I don't know" and "um."

The twelve categories listed under Strategies refer to the function or purpose of the message.

A message is defined as Focusing if it is used to initiate a discussion. It is also used as a means of holding a speaker's place in a conversation and as a means of signaling a shift in the context of what is being discussed. For example, the messages, "Everybody look at p. 11 now... Then what did the wolf do?" and "Okay, now." are coded as focusing behaviors.

The category entitled Ignoring is used when no response occurs where one was required.

Confirming+ refers to verbal and non-verbal acceptance of a response. Responses such as "yes," "very good," "fine," etc., are members of this category.

Confirming- refers to a "no" response or non-acceptance of a previous response.

Continuance can be a verbal or non-verbal message that provides a cue to the speaker that the listener is following the speaker's message. In the exchange, "They're going out to live on their own." "Um-hum" the words um-hum serve as a cue to the speaker that the listener is following. Another example.."The little pig built a house of straw."..."Do you remember if that was the first, second or third little pig?" contains a continuance cue because the listener has responded to the speaker's message by building a question from the contiguous information given by the speaker.

Extending strategies provide additional or new information about a topic. In a lesson on quotation marks, the following conversation contains an extending strategy. "Do you see those two little marks? Those are called quotation marks and it means someone's talking. And after it, it tells who's doing the talk-

ing...(as in)...'asked Hippo.'"

Raising refers to a message that is aimed at raising the level of the discussion, e.g., "The pigs in this story are just like people doing things. But, do you think this is a true story or a make-believe story?"

Clarifying refers to messages that are meant to bring about explanations or redefinitions of a previous message or behavior., e.g., "The wolf blew down the house," and the response, "Which house?"

Editing strategies included false starts, comments such as "um" or "uh." They are place markers within conversations.

Messages that are given with the intent of controlling behavior or the interaction of the participants is coded as Controlling. For example, "James, look. You have to know where these marks are." or "I want you to find some things for me, and read only what I ask you to read."

Refocusing refers to the re-establishing of a previous question or response. For example, "There's another sentence that Blue said."

When the speaker re-states or paraphrases all or part of a previous message, whether it is that of the original speaker or another participant, it is coded as a Re-stating strategy. "Do you see before the w, those two little marks?" "See those two little marks?"

The last feature entitled Tie refers to the relationships that occur as a result of the behaviors and/or message of others. Ties can be across conversational units and across contexts. A message is tied to a teacher if the message builds on the teacher's own purpose or goal or feeds back to the teacher's message.

A message is tied to a student if the message provides feedback to the student. extends the student's response, the response is used as a basis for the next response, or the student builds his/her own message.

A message is tied to the text, material or media-aid if it is a direct trigger for a message unit.

- OVERHEAD OF TEACHER R -
2/79

This is an analysis of a reading lesson conducted in

Tchr. R — Quotation Marks — Pg. 1 - 2/79

Transcript Line	SOURCE		FORM				STRATEGIES												LEVEL			TIE				UNIT RESOLUTION				
	Teacher	Student	Question	Response +	Response 0	Response -	Focusing	Ignoring	Confirming +	Confirming -	Continuance	Extending	Raising	Clarifying	Editing	Controlling	Refocusing	Restating	Factual	Interpret	Applicative	Teacher	Student	Lesson		Resolved Interaction	Unresolved Interaction	Instruction Sequence	Phase	Lesson
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Tchr. R.

Pg. 2 - 2/79

Transcript Line	SOURCE		FORM				STRATEGIES												LEVEL			TIE				UNIT RESOLUTION				
	Teacher	Student	Question	Response+	Response0	Response -	Focusing	Ignoring	Confirming +	Confirming -	Continuance	Extending	Raising	Clarifying	Editing	Controlling	Refocusing	Restating	Factual	Interpret	Applicative	Teacher	Student	Lesson		Resolved Interaction	Unresolved Interaction	Instruction Sequence	Phase	Lesson
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Tchr. R.

Transcript Line	SOURCE		FORM				STRATEGIES												LEVEL			TIE				UNIT RESOLUTION				
	Teacher	Student	Question	Response+	Response0	Response -	Focusing	Ignoring	Confirming +	Confirming -	Continuance	Extending	Raising	Clarifying	Editing	Controlling	Refocusing	Restating	Factual	Interpret	Applicative	Teacher	Student	Lesson		Resolved Interaction	Unresolved Interaction	Instruction Sequence	Phase	Lesson
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February, 1979. This portion represents three minutes of instructional time. This teacher was one of six who volunteered to be taped throughout the three-year project.

The source of the instructional conversations is very definitely the teacher. Of the 59 lines transcribed in this sample, there are only 10 instances of student-initiated messages, i.e., only 16% of the time, did students function as the source of a message. This pattern repeated throughout this teacher's videotaped sessions for the first year and then began to dissipate in the subsequent tapings during the last two years of the project.

The form of the message unit, in a majority of the instances, is in the Response+ category. That is, the post hoc analysis showed that given the previous messages, the responses that were constructed were the kinds of responses that could be expected.

All of the responses were at the factual level, and were tied to a media aid - in this case, they were text-focused.

Few spontaneous messages were offered. In those particular instances, the source was the teacher and they were constructed for the purpose of disciplining a member of the class.

The only questions ever asked in this sample were initiated by the teacher.

There were no instances of non-responses and comments such as "I don't know," and "um."

Almost half of the messages in this sample are instances of focusing behavior. All are teacher-initiated.

Thirty-seven percent of the messages are concerned with the control of the interaction and/or the behavior of the participants. Most of the clarifying messages are tied to the teacher, and served to clarify her behavior, e.g., "On page 10 I want you to find the sentence that tells what Elephant Blue did one day. Read me that one sentence." Continuance and extension messages are text-focused.

Further into the sample, re-stating and re-focusing strategies show an increase in frequency. Both of these strategies promote the continuance of messages - in these cases teacher-initiated messages - through re-stating, or partially re-stating the previous message or response. Both of these strategies occurred primarily during instances of the use of controlling

messages, and use increased a: instances of controlling messages increased.

For the most part, the messages either build on the teacher's purpose or goal or are directly triggered by the text. Messages tied to the student are comments such as "Fine" or "Very good."

- OVERHEAD OF TEACHER R -

3/81

In contrast, the source of these instructional conversations is shared. Of the 75 lines transcribed, there are 28 instances of student-initiated messages, i.e., 37% of the time, students functioned as the source of a message.

The form of the message units has expanded to include all four categories.

Instances of the use of focusing strategies have sharply declined as have instances of the use of controlling strategies. Focus is maintained through extending and clarifying strategies.

e.g., (Student) "The wolf blew down the house."
(Teacher) "Which house?"
(Student) "All...all three of the houses."
(Teacher) "Okay."
(Student) "Except for one of them."
(Teacher) "Oh, except for which one?"
(Student) "The brick one."

Although in most instances the teacher is monitoring the topic of conversation, the recurrence of these kinds of exchanges suggests that the teacher is maintaining less distance during instruction and is choosing instead to impart reading instruction through participation in on-going conversations.

Shifts in focus are signaled by the use of re-focusing and re-stating strategies,

e.g., "I'm glad you mentioned huffing and puffing and blowing the house in...Who does that?"

The level of the message unit shifts throughout the conversation. At first, there is an exchange of factual information - usually in response to the question "Tell me what you know about the Three Little Pigs?" This focus spawns some interpretive level responses. Further into the sample, the message units shift to the applicative level.

Tchr. R

Three Little Pigs

Transcript Line	SOURCE		FORM				STRATEGIES											LEVEL			TIE				UNIT RESOLUTION				
	Teacher	Student	Question	Response+	Response0	Response -	Focusing	Ignoring	Confirming +	Confirming -	Continuance	Extending	Raising	Clarifying	Editing	Controlling	Refocusing	Restating	Factual	Interpret	Applicative	Teacher	Student	Lesson		Resolved Interaction	Unresolved Interaction	Instruction Sequence	Phase	Lesson
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Tchr. R.

pg. 2 - 3/81

Transcript Line	SOURCE		FORM				STRATEGIES											LEVEL			TIE				UNIT RESOLUTION				
	Teacher	Student	Question	Response+	Response0	Response -	Focusing	Ignoring	Confirming +	Confirming -	Continuance	Extending	Raising	Clarifying	Editing	Controlling	Refocusing	Restating	Factual	Interpret	Applicative	Teacher	Student	Lesson		Resolved Interaction	Unresolved Interaction	Instruction Sequence	Phase	Lesson
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Tchr. R

TRANSCRIPT Line	SOURCE Teacher	SOURCE Student	FORM Question	FORM Response+	FORM Response0	FORM Response -	STRATEGIES Focusing	Ignoring	Confirming +	Confirming -	Continuance	Extending	Raising	Clarifying	Editing	Controlling	Refocusing	Restating	LEVEL Factual	Interpret	Applicative	TIE Teacher	TIE Student	TIE Lesson		UNIT RESOLUTION Resolved Interaction	Unresolved Interaction	Instruction Sequence	Phase	Lesson
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Tchr. R

Transcript Line	SOURCE		FORM				STRATEGIES												LEVEL			TIE				UNIT RESOLUTION				
	Teacher	Student	Question	Response+	Response0	Response-	Focusing	Ignoring	Confirming +	Confirming -	Continuance	Extending	Raising	Clarifying	Editing	Controlling	Refocusing	Restating	Factual	Interpret	Applicative	Teacher	Student	Lesson		Resolved Interaction	Unresolved Interaction	Instruction Sequence	Phase	Lesson
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(Teacher)

e.g., "The pigs in this story are just like people doing things. But, do you think this is a true story or a make-believe story?"

(Class)

"A make-believe story."

(Teacher)

"What makes you think it's a make-believe story?"

All conversations are tied to the teacher or student, none are triggered directly by the text.

Noting these differences, then, how can we explain the shift in the instructional conversations? Given the influence of time and experience, it could be that the teacher would have produced these changes, anyway. It's also possible that the teacher, mindful of my position and theoretical orientation, chose to alter her instructional conversations only on those occasions where I was present. Perhaps the shifts in the instructional conversations were due to differences in subject matter or in the make-up of the classes.

Additional information, supplied from other sources and instruments supports the contention that this particular teacher utilized a directive style of teaching throughout her six years of experience and that she tended to approach all subjects in this same manner. Other video tapes that we have of her show her moving away from directive type behaviors as time passes.

The teacher's behavior may have been influenced by my presence, to some degree. But a comparison of the room environment--that is, the way in which she chose to decorate the classroom and offer the teaching materials, shows a marked change from the way it looked at the beginning of the project and the way it looks now. Where the teacher had always used reading kits, flash cards, vowel games, taped phonics lessons, etc., she had replaced those materials over the three-year period of time, with journal writing activities, child-authored texts, a tape and book library of folk tales, fairy tales, predictable language, chart stories, student-prepared plays, a puppet stage, etc.

It seems unlikely that this teacher would have chosen to almost totally change her established classroom environment of six years ONLY in response to my position or to my presence during the taping sessions.

Over the period of time that we were taping these classes, this teacher was involved in an open concept curriculum which necessitated her having many of the same children during the course of the day and over the course of the three years. Therefore, it would not seem that the shifts in the types of instructional conversations would be due to differences in the make-up of the classes.

While it must be remembered that this is only one pilot study, limited by this particular set of circumstances, I think that these findings do indicate that in-service projects of this kind do produce the kind of change that supports improvement in teacher instruction and allows the instruction to be influenced by information offered by the student. Changes of this type merit closer examination.

TEACHER_____

-Transcribed Conversation-Teacher R 2/79 (3 minute sample)
-Transcribed Conversation-Teacher R 3/81 (3 minute sample)

TRANSCRIPT LINE	SOURCE	MESSAGE UNITS /TRANSCRIPT TEXT
001	R	Now, we're not just going to read everything.
002	R	I want you to find some things for me, and read only what I ask you to read.
003	R	Listen carefully everyone.
004	R	On page 10, I want you to find the sentence....
005	R	Listen, Michelle, and look.
006	R	That tells what Elephant Blue did one day.
007	R	Read me that one sentence.
008	M	'One day Elephant Blue went for a walk.'
009	R	Very good.
010	R	Everybody look at pg. 11 now.
011	R	The first sentence on pg. 11 says, "Soon Elephant Blue met Hipp."
012	R	Look at the second sentence.
013	R	Put your finger on the second sentence.
014	R	It says, "Where are you going?"
015	R	Do you see before the w, those two little marks?
016	R	James, look, you have to know where these marks are.
017	R	See those two little marks?
018	J	Yeah
019	R	James!
020	J	What?
021	R	"Where are you going?"
022	R	There's a question mark.

TEACHER_____

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023	R	James, look at your book.
024	R	James, look at your book.
025	R	You see those two little marks?
026	R	Has the quotation mark and it says "Where are you going," and it has a question mark and two little marks.
027	R	Do you see those?
028	J	Yes
029	R	Those are called quotation marks and it means someone's talking.
030	R	And after it, it tells who's doing the talking, 'asked Hippo.'
031	R	I want you to look on this page and find something that Hippo said.
032	R	Look down the page and find a sentence that has these little marks and its something that Hippo said.
033	R	Read me a sentence that Hippo said.
034	R	Ronnie
035	r	'Where are you going today? Hippo...'
036	R	Very good.
037	R	Find another sentence that Hippo said on this page.
038	R	Arthur
039	R	Let's read a little louder, Arthur, I can't hear you.
040	A	'I will if you will come this second.'
041	R	Very good.
042	R	Find a sentence that Elephant Blue says on this page.
043	R	A sentence that Elephant Blue says, Ronnie.

TEACHER_____

TRANSCRIPT LINE	SOURCE	MESSAGE UNITS /TRANSCRIPT TEXT
044	r	'Alright,' said...
045	R	Find another sentence that Blue says on this page, Renea
046	re	'If you will...'
047	R	Is that what Blue said?
048	R	Who said that?
049	re	Hippo
050	R	Hippo said that.
051	R	There's another sentence that Blue said.
052	R	Sandra, look at your book and find the sentence Blue said.
053	R	We've already had the one that says, 'alright'
054	R	There is another one.
055	R	Ronnie, look at your book
056	R	Sondra
057	S	'For a walk,' said...
058	R	Very good.
059	R	Turn to page 12.

TEACHER_____

TRANSCRIPT LINE	SOURCE	MESSAGE UNITS/TRANSCRIPT TEXT
001	R	Okay
002	R	Tell me what you know about the Three Little Pigs
003	R	One thing you know.
004	C	Chivonda
005	C	The wolf came down, down the chimney and splashed into somebody's pot.
006	R	When did that happen Civonda?
007	R	At the beginning, middle or end of the story?
008	C	The end.
009	R	Toward the end of the story.
010	R	What do you know about the story, Jason?
011	J	Uh, the little pig built a house of straw.
012	R	Do you remember if that was the first, second or third little pig?
013	J	The first.
014	R	Who else knows something about the three little pigs?
015	R	Charlene
016	C	. . . . .
017	R	I can't quite hear you, Charlene.
018	R	Will you tell me a little louder?
019	C	The wolf blew the house down.
020	R	Which house?
021	C	All...all three of the houses.
022	R	Okay
023	C	Except for one of them

TRANSCRIPT LINE	SOURCE	MESSAGE UNITS/TRANSCRIPT TEXT
024	R	Oh, except for which one?
025	C	The brick house.
026	R	The brick house.
027	R	Andy, what do you know about the three little pigs?
028	A	They tried...the wolf tried to blow the house down.
029	A	But he couldn't because it was made out of bricks.
030	R	Steven, what do you know?
031	S	When, uhm...When the first pigs... hm..hm..were building their house, and the wolf was hiding behind the tree...then the next pig was going to build a house.
032	R	What was the next little pig going to build his house out of?
033	S	Wood.
034	R	Okay. (Nods head yes)
035	R	Tasha, have you told us something?
036	T	Un, uh
037	R	Okay.
038	T	They was all going to say good-bye to their mother.
039	T	On the first page.
040	R	On the first page of the book, you saw them saying good-bye to their mother. (All look at book.)
041	R	They're going out to live on their own.
042	T	Um hum
043	R	That's something that boys and girls do when they get bigger, isn't it?
044	T	(Nods yes)

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045	R	They go out to find a house to live by themselves.
046	R	So that the little pigs are like people in that.
047	R	The pigs in this story are just like people doing things.
048	R	But, do you think this is a true story or a make-believe story?
049	Class	A make-believe story!
050	R	A make-believe story.
051	R	What makes you think it's a make-believe story?
052	R	David
053	D	Uh, because, uh, the pigs don't talk.
054	R	Pigs do not talk (nods yes)
055	S	And, the wolf can't blow down the house.
056	R	John Feiffer! (Returns attention to Steve)
057	S	The wolf can't blow down the house.
058	R	Okay.
059	R	Andy
060	A	The wolf can't talk, and they can't go 'I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in.'
061	R	Okay.
062	R	I'm glad you mentioned huffing and puffing and blowing the house in.
063	R	Who does that?
064	Class	Oh! (Hands up, children leaning forward)
065	R	Who huffs....
066	A	The wolf.
067	R	The wolf huffs and puffs.

TRANSCRIPT LINE		SOURCE	MESSAGE UNITS/TRANSCRIPT TEXT
068		R	And what does the little pig say when he tells the wolf...he says...
069	Class		Not by the hair on my chinny, chin, chin.
070		R	Okay.
071		R	Very good.
072		R	Charlene.
073		C	(Unable to hear comment.)
074		R	Okay.
075		R	Turn your book, now to page two.